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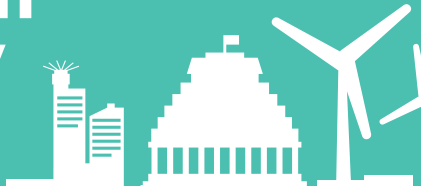
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

INDEPENDENT LIVING STUDENT HANDBOOK

Updated November 2024



SNAPSHOT: Living in our community



GIVE FEEDBACK



Speak to staff or the residents' committee, use the suggestion box, or email accommodation@vuw.ac.nz

PRACTISE GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE

Tell us if you're sick, so we can help. Wash your hands thoroughly and sneeze and cough into your elbow.



We are an inclusive community, and our culture is centred around respect, responsibility, fairness, integrity, and empathy. You are a valued part of our community, and we all have a part to play to ensure our accommodation communities are safe and enjoyable places to live. You'll find more detail in this handbook.

SCAN ME
TO GO TO THE
[ACCOMMODATION
PORTAL](#)



CONNECT WELL

The University's Connect Well site helps you [stay connected](#) with friends and whānau.

YOUR GUESTS ARE WELCOME

We have some boundaries in place to ensure the safety of our community. Read through these carefully in our guests' section on [page 8](#).

PRIVACY AND SAFETY



Some areas are out of bounds, including staff and RA rooms, the basement, service areas, and the roof, ledges, and balconies.

YOUR ACCESS CARD OR KEY



Keep it close, don't lend it, and let us know if you lose it. Don't forget to [lock your door](#).

NOISE



Sleep is important for study and wellbeing. Respect your neighbours and our quiet hours—see the noise section on [page 7](#).

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Talk to your head of hall if you're experiencing [financial issues](#). They can refer you to Student Finance for support. You can use your student hardship funds towards your accommodation.

SMOKEFREE HALLS



Our halls and grounds are [smokefree and vape-free](#) environments.

ALCOHOL

We respect your right as adults to drink; however, we ask you to follow our limits in the hall for the health and safety of our whole community. Read the alcohol section on [page 9](#).



ACCOMMODATION WELLBEING ADVISERS

Our [AWAs](#) (formerly known as student support coordinators or SSCs) are available to help you navigate the challenges of university life and support you through any issues you are experiencing.

REPORTING CONCERNING BEHAVIOUR

You are entitled to study, socialise, and work in an environment of safety and respect. If you need support or would like to [report concerning behaviour](#), contact the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team.

RESTORATIVE COMMUNITIES

When conflicts occur, a restorative process is available where parties meet and discuss the situation and repair the harm. Learn more about this programme on [page 11](#).

STUDENT

SUCCESS ADVISERS

They are your first point of [contact](#) for your studies.

SCAN ME



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THE PASTORAL CARE CODE: The Government's Pastoral Care Code sets out the University's roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students. This includes fostering learning environments that are safe and designed to support positive learning experiences of diverse learner groups. During your time here, you have access to a range of services and support to promote your overall wellbeing, development, and educational achievement. Read more about the code and our obligations.

www.wgtn.ac.nz/accommodation/pastoral-care

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington uses all reasonable skill and care to ensure the information contained here was accurate at the time it was prepared. However, matters covered by this publication are subject to change due to a continuous process of review, and to unanticipated circumstances. The University therefore reserves the right to make any changes without notice. So far as the law permits, the University accepts no responsibility for any loss suffered by any person due to reliance (either whole or in part) on the information contained in this publication, whether direct or indirect, and whether foreseeable or not.

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME



E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi kātoa—nau mai, haere mai ki Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington.

Tēnā koe, noa'ia, tālofa lava, kam na mauri, mālō e lelei, tālofa, ni sa bula vinaka, fakaalofa lahi atu, mālō ni kiaorana, and warm Pacific greetings.

Welcome to your new home away from home. We are pleased you have joined us—we think Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington is a fantastic place to live.

My name is Simon Johnson and I'm part of the University Accommodation team as director, Campus Operations.

Many of you may have lived in a hall previously or you might be a more mature student who is looking forward to living independently in a flatting or studio environment. All our staff are focused on making the independent living environment a great place for you to live. We will help you in many ways, from providing advice and support to helping organise programmes and activities throughout the year.

This handbook identifies the services, policies, and resources you need to be an informed resident and have a successful year, and also includes plenty of handy tips to help you have a great time. We encourage you to take the time to read it and to always keep it handy for reference purposes.

Flat rules are an important way of ensuring that everyone shows respect to each other and to university property. We will provide guidance, through flat meetings, to establish these for your individual flat requirements.

We have a focus on building healthy and respectful communities, setting you up well for your years ahead.

It is important to prioritise your wellbeing and to seek support if needed. Accommodation wellbeing advisers are available to assist you to connect with the University's services, including Te Taiako—Student Learning and Mauri Ora—Student Health and Counselling.

Your wellbeing and safety are of the utmost importance to us, and we have a strong team of staff to care for you. We consider this to be a partnership between you, your community, the University, and your whānau, and we encourage you to come to us at any time with questions or concerns.

Our halls are restorative communities, part of an institution-wide commitment to becoming a restorative university. We want to have open communication with residents; if you need any more information, contact any member of our team. We're all here to help you gain the most from your time at Te Herenga Waka.

I wish you a successful year.

Ngā mihi nui.

Simon Johnson

Director, Campus Operations



THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook includes rules, requirements, and policies that we believe are desirable for the proper management of the hall or flat, including our obligations under the pastoral care codes for international and domestic students to ensure a safe, healthy, and respectful community conducive to study for all.

We may reissue and update this handbook from time to time, as permitted under the Hall Residence Agreement. We will let you know if we update the handbook. If there is any inconsistency between this handbook and the Hall Residence Agreement, the Hall Residence Agreement takes precedence.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

📞 24-hour duty phone 027 522 9098

✉ independent.living@vuw.ac.nz

EDUCATION HOUSE

📍 178 Willis Street
Te Aro, Wellington 6140

EVERTON HALL

📍 10–12 Everton Terrace
Kelburn, Wellington 6012

KELBURN FLATS—WHARE HĪNAU

📍 2 Waiteata Road
Wellington 6140

WHĀNAU MĀRAMA APARTMENTS

📍 20 Haining Street
Te Aro, Wellington 6011

222 WILLIS APARTMENTS

📍 222 Willis Street
Te Aro, Wellington 6011

IN AN EMERGENCY, PHONE 111

If you need support, you can always talk to a staff member or one of our accommodation wellbeing advisers. Other support services are available 24 hours a day, seven days per week.

► **Need to talk? Text or phone 1737**

Free phone or text 1737 to speak with a trained counsellor at the national 1737 Need to Talk? service. You can access this service when you need it and when you are supporting others. This is a free helpline.

► **Greater Wellington Mental Health and Addiction Service 0800 745 477**

The Greater Wellington Mental Health and Addiction Service is a mental health and addiction contact centre for people in crisis or experiencing moderate to severe mental health or addiction problems. This free service is staffed by mental health and addiction professionals.

► **Healthline 0800 611 116**

Call if you're feeling unwell but you're not sure if you need to see a doctor, or if you want some advice about a family member or a friend who's sick (if you are with them).

If it's a medical emergency, phone 111.

A medical emergency includes chest pain or tightness, difficulty breathing, choking, severe bleeding or bleeding that won't stop, sudden weakness or difficulty talking, fainting, or unconsciousness.

► **Wellington Accident and Urgent Medical Centre**

17 Adelaide Road, Newtown

Open 8 am–11 pm

📞 04 384 4944



YOUR WELLBEING

There is always a friendly ear to hear your concerns and support you to access the help you need during challenging times.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

We endeavour to provide an environment conducive to academic success. If you require academic assistance, do not hesitate to discuss this with any member of the team. Your student success adviser will touch base with you throughout the year to discuss your academic progress.

Residents who are enrolled at Victoria University of Wellington must be full-time students and are expected to attend, in person or digitally, the lectures, tutorials, and laboratory sessions for which they are enrolled.

ADD A BIT OF EXERCISE IN YOUR DAY

Make time for things you enjoy doing. Movement optimises learning. When you exercise, chemicals that promote learning are released. They help you feel alert, motivated, positive, more in control, and patient. Find something you enjoy and keep doing it. Join with others in your community to exercise together and support your exercise routine.

University Recreation Wellington provides sports, recreation, wellbeing, fitness, and club services for the university community.

There are group fitness classes and gym facilities at Kelburn and Pipitea campuses equipped with a full range of machine and free weights as well as a comprehensive selection of cardio equipment.

There are several membership options available. Find out what membership is right for you.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/recreation

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/recreation/fitness-and-wellbeing/memberships

PREVENTING ILLNESS

Staying healthy and protecting yourself from preventable illness while you are studying at university is important.

PERSONAL HYGIENE AND ILLNESS

Remember to practise good personal hygiene.

- ▶ Wash your hands often and use the hand-sanitiser stations where available.
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- ▶ If you are unwell, stay in your room and out of common areas (government advice is to stay home if unwell).
- ▶ Maintain a clean, tidy room, vacuum, open your window, and do your laundry regularly.

If you are sick, or know another resident who is sick, tell the staff or call the duty phone so that the appropriate care can be arranged. If isolation is required to prevent the spread of a contagious illness, you must abide by the isolation procedure that will be provided to you.

All acute illnesses must be reported to hall staff immediately.

If you are enrolled as a Victoria University of Wellington student, contact Mauri Ora—Student Health and Counselling to enrol or make an appointment on 04 463 5308.

VACCINATIONS

Staying healthy and protecting yourself from preventable illness while you are studying at university is important.

We strongly recommend you and your guests are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), meningococcal ACWY, and pertussis (whooping cough). You can read more about meningococcal disease below. The varicella immunisation is also recommended for students who have not had chickenpox or who have not already completed a course of the varicella immunisation. There is a cost for the pertussis and varicella immunisations. There is no cost for the MMR immunisation and the meningococcal ACWY vaccination.

If you are not able to have these immunisations before arriving on campus, you can arrange to get them at Mauri Ora—Student Health and Counselling, ideally during Orientation. To book an appointment, phone 04 463 5308 or visit the Mauri Ora reception at the Kelburn campus or Te Taunaki reception at the Pipitea campus.

Meningococcal disease

Meningococcal disease is an infection caused by bacteria. There are different types of meningococcal bacteria, including A, B, C, W, and Y. In Aotearoa New Zealand, most meningococcal disease is caused by the group B bacteria.

It can lead to two very serious illnesses: meningitis, an infection of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord, and septicemia (blood poisoning).

The disease is spread in similar ways to the common cold—by coughing and sneezing, or by contact with saliva (spit). People who survive meningococcal disease often have serious long-term effects, including amputation of limbs, brain injury, hearing loss, permanent skin scarring, and seizures.

It can affect anyone but is most common in young children and those living in close-living accommodation such as university halls of residence, hostels, and boarding facilities. It can lead to serious illness or death among people who are otherwise healthy.

The vaccine for meningococcal B is called Bexsero and requires two doses given eight weeks apart. The vaccine for the meningococcal ACWY is called Menactra or MenQuadfi requires only one dose. Both vaccines are usually given into the upper arm and can be given at the same time as other vaccines such as the influenza (flu) or COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccines are available through Mauri Ora—Student Health or your GP.

For more information, go to www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/meningococcal-disease-including-meningitis

Symptoms of meningitis in an adult

Typically, in the initial stages it can mimic a flulike illness. Symptoms to watch out for depend on the type of infection, but might include:

- ▶ abdominal pain
- ▶ fever
- ▶ headache
- ▶ joint swelling
- ▶ a rash
- ▶ shortness of breath
- ▶ stiff neck
- ▶ vomiting.

If you or someone else is experiencing the symptoms of meningitis, seek medical attention immediately by calling our staff and Mauri Ora—Student Health and Counselling on 04 463 5308, Healthline on 0800 611 116 (24 hours), or 111.

WELLBEING AGREEMENT

We want to ensure your safety and wellbeing while you live with us and be able to support you and meet your needs. We are committed to providing a safe community for you.

All staff are here to help you stay on track with your own wellbeing. If needed, we may ask you to sign an agreement that includes practical steps you can take to support your welfare.

If this is needed, the head of hall and an accommodation wellbeing adviser will work together with you to agree on these steps and find ways to implement or update your wellbeing goals.

The agreement will also:

- ▶ clarify the support available to you and other residents to manage your health and wellbeing
- ▶ clarify expected behaviour so it is a safe and supportive environment for you and all residents living in the community
- ▶ support you to manage your wellness.

If, at any stage, you are not meeting your obligations outlined in this agreement, or the support required is beyond what we can provide, then a different course of action may follow.

Response to serious wellbeing concerns and self-harm

If the support you require is beyond what we can provide, such as if self-harm is involved, we will talk to you about spending recovery time in a supportive environment away from the hall. This is generally with family and whānau or other people you are closest to. This respite break allows you to recover emotional wellbeing and gives time for a longer-term wellness plan to be developed. The hall will work with you and your whānau to support your return at the appropriate time.

CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Building a diverse and inclusive community is an important part of our university values. We encourage all residents to get involved in social, sporting, or cultural activities, even if in only a small way. By doing this, you'll encounter people whose lifestyles, backgrounds, personalities, and values are different from your own. We want you to learn from each other and enjoy your time together. Take the time to get to know people around you, and never be afraid to ask questions or seek advice or guidance.

Activities offered inside and outside the community over the course of the year cover a range of social, cultural, arts, volunteering, and sporting events. The team will keep you informed of what's happening through social media and day-to-day contact.

Victoria University of Wellington offers current students helpful resources in the Connect Well section of our website, co-designed with student leaders. There are links to some great online resources to explore workshop topics on connecting, loneliness, assertiveness, and negotiating.

University Clubs helps you get involved in the club community on campus and joining it is a fantastic way to enjoy new activities and learn new things.

 www.wgtn.ac.nz/clubs

HOW TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON

Our community has its own private Facebook group and Instagram page for residents to read and post relevant items. There is always a great range of activities on offer. Check out our social media for the latest information on what's happening, and how to get involved in the events.

Also, keep your eye on posters and noticeboards around the community that will keep you informed of any upcoming events or opportunities.

We encourage you to make suggestions for events to staff and the resident committee.

Any important information will be emailed to you, so check your email regularly.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Be respectful of other users of our social media accounts. Residents must not post anything that may be considered discriminatory or harmful against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual on any social media platform. For example:

- ▶ making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, or age
- ▶ using social media to bully another individual or spread damaging gossip
- ▶ posting images that are discriminatory or offensive, or linking to such content.

We reserve the right to delete any post that may cause offence and could be detrimental to our community. See further information and advice on [Netsafe](#) about bullying and abuse online.

Permission of others

You should also be mindful of having sought and gained the consent of involved parties, whether posting to your hall's Facebook group or any personal pages or accounts. This is particularly relevant for photos. You must always gain permission from anyone whose photo you intend to post.

If they don't want their photo posted, respect that decision.

If you post something without the express permission of the person involved, it may be a breach of their privacy.

Depending on the nature of the material, there may be more serious repercussions, such as legal action or a police investigation.

If in doubt, always ask the person concerned. You can't assume they will agree. If you can't contact them or have any doubts about what you're doing, don't post.

Harmful digital communications

We expect all community members to use social media platforms and digital communications responsibly. The hall strictly prohibits accounts, particularly 'Confessions' pages, that may cause harm to others.

Residents must also adhere to the University's [Student Conduct Statute](#) and [Acceptable Use of Information Systems Statute](#).

Under the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015, it is illegal to make a visual recording of an intimate nature, on any device, of another person without their knowledge or consent. It protects the right to safety and freedom from harm or intimidation in digital communications.

Any allegation of such misconduct by a resident will be treated seriously and likely referred to the Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team.





ISSUES WITH FLATMATES AND FRIENDS

If you have an issue with a friend or fellow resident, try to talk it over with them first. Don't forget that there's always someone here in the community for you to talk to if you're not sure how to approach it. Having disagreements is part of life, and university is no different, so you don't have to feel that you're alone in this.

- Talk to the person about how their actions are affecting you.
- Don't get into accusations—it'll descend into an argument pretty quickly.
- Think of solutions that can accommodate the interests of all involved—in other words, don't list all the things they've done wrong. Explain how you think things could work between you.

Remember, we're here to support you, so if you feel that you can't come up with suitable compromises, you can speak to a member of the team to discuss your problem.

Check out the University's Connect Well website, which features information that may help you stay connected, with tips on problem sharing, friendships, conflicts, and talking about your feelings.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/connect-well

PERSONAL ISSUES

Personal issues such as academic stress, problematic substance use, depression, and eating disorders can strain relationships in your living environment, friendship group, or community. You can, and should, seek help if this is affecting you or a friend of yours.

These personal issues do not just affect one person. Your concern about protecting a flatmate or friend's privacy should not keep you from getting support personally, or for the other person.

If you're worried about a friend, or if you feel the behaviour of another resident is affecting the lives of others, you have the right and responsibility to seek help both personally and for the other person.

It may be that your action spares the individual concerned painful consequences, now or later. You can seek assistance from a staff member and rest assured that your privacy, security, and comfort are of utmost importance to the entire team.

Stressors and disappointments are a normal part of life, and upsetting events will happen to everybody from time to time. But sometimes, stresses and worries can seem to dominate your life, and you may find yourself getting upset more than usual.

If things go wrong or just don't seem right, or you simply feel isolated, there are plenty of people you can talk to about whatever is on your mind. Some will be able to offer advice and guidance, and some are trained to simply listen. Refer to page 3 for some contacts.

You will also find a wealth of support on the University website. Check out the student services page.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-health-counselling/appointments

NOISE

Quiet time is from 10 pm on weeknights and 11 pm (10 pm for Education House) on Fridays and Saturdays.

During examination times, quiet hours will be extended.

Be aware of how loud you and any guests are being. Others may feel unwelcome if you and your mates are making lots of noise in the communal areas of the building.

Be mindful of how loud your conversations may be on the phone or while video calling.



GUESTS

Unaccompanied, intoxicated, or disorderly guests will be required to leave immediately. Staff may ask a guest to leave at any time. Remember that you are fully responsible for your guests' actions while they are at your flat or hall. If your guest causes any damage, you will be liable for all costs of repair, cleaning, or replacement.

As a resident, you must not let your guest use your key or access card. A guest is welcome to stay for a night or two if a guest pass is signed by a staff member at least 24 hours in advance of the guest's arrival. No guest may stay on a regular basis, and residents may have only one overnight guest at a time. It is best to plan ahead to avoid disappointment. All guests must be signed in at the office at their time of arrival.

Any guest under the age of 18 requires advance approval from the head of hall. This approval is at the head of hall's discretion and may involve consulting with the underage person's parent or guardian.

The head of hall has the right to enforce a no-guest policy, which may occur during, but is not limited to, the Trimester 1 orientation period (2–4 weeks) and study and assessment periods.

FLAT GATHERINGS

If you're going to have a get-together, plan it as a flat group and don't leave anyone out.

Gatherings can occur only on Fridays and Saturdays, and applications need to be submitted to the head of hall at least 48 hours in advance. Guests must vacate by the hall quiet time. No gatherings can take place during study and exam periods.

Respect the conditions you agreed to in your flat agreement.

Neighbours are much more tolerant if you let them know about a gathering.

Twenty-first birthday parties and similar large events are disruptive for the community and neighbours and should be held off site.

SAFETY IN THE CITY

Wellington is a friendly and dynamic place. Like in any urban area, it is sensible to be security conscious both at home and when you are out and about. So, when travelling to and from the community, especially at night, you should take simple security precautions—remember to stick to busy, well-lit streets and stick with your mates.

The free downtown shuttle transports residents to the central city from Weir House and Te Puni Village at 10 pm on Friday and Saturday nights.

Get-home-safe van

We also provide a safety van that will return students from Courtenay Place in the central city to all halls. This service begins at midnight on Friday and Saturday nights and runs through to 2 am. It helps you get back to your hall safely at the end of the evening.

SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

Be mindful of your personal security.

- ▶ Always lock your bedroom door when you leave it.
- ▶ Make sure that your flat's external doors are kept locked at all times.
- ▶ Don't prop open doors.
- ▶ Don't let people who you do not know follow you into a building.
- ▶ Get to know your neighbours.
- ▶ Never lend your key or swipe card to another person.
- ▶ Don't leave your room key under a pot plant, doormat, or on top of the door frame. These are the first places opportunist burglars would look.
- ▶ Close your windows when you are not in your room or flat.
- ▶ Don't leave money or valuables in full view when you are not in your room or flat.
- ▶ Contact staff via the duty phone if you notice any suspicious people or behaviour in or around the community.

If you feel that your personal security is being threatened while you're in the community, contact staff via the duty phone and a team member will assist you.

ALCOHOL, SMOKING, VAPING, AND DRUGS

Victoria University of Wellington encourages and promotes a sensible and responsible attitude towards alcohol.

We respect your decision, as an adult, to drink alcohol. The University's rules and guidelines around individual alcohol use are intended to promote personal responsibility and a balanced lifestyle that will help you effectively manage your wellbeing. It is expected that these decisions will be based on personal values and social responsibility, conform to the laws of New Zealand, and support the health and welfare of everyone.

Anyone who chooses to consume alcohol will be held fully responsible for their behaviour while under the influence of alcohol. Failure to comply with the specifics and spirit of these guidelines can result in termination of your residence agreement.

The following policy is to promote sensible and legal consumption of alcohol.

Alcohol consumption on site

Guests aged under 18 will not be allowed to consume or be in possession of alcohol on the premises. If you are 18 or older, reasonable consumption of alcohol in your room or flat is allowed, provided that noise and/or damage is not a problem and the hall is not observing an alcohol-free period (for example, during exams).

You can drink alcohol and gather in designated common areas or for specific events as advised by hall staff. You are expected to be considerate of the needs of others to prioritise study and sleep in the flat. If excessive noise can be heard at any time from outside your room or designated common area, and alcohol is involved, then your gathering could be closed down.

We encourage you to:

- ▶ know your limits—put your health and wellbeing first
- ▶ have a plan in place for travelling to and from the city (make use of the safety bus and get-home-safe van)
- ▶ look out for yourself and your friends
- ▶ read through available resources and exercise judgement in individual situations
- ▶ always keep yourself safe
- ▶ notify a hall staff member if you are concerned about a situation or incident
- ▶ respect your community and the wider neighbourhood
- ▶ manage your alcohol consumption by drinking water between alcoholic drinks—managing your intake will help you manage your emotions
- ▶ talk to an accommodation wellbeing adviser if you are concerned about your drinking.

For more information about safe drinking, go to the following websites.

- i** www.alcohol.org.nz
- i** www.drinkaware.co.uk
- i** <https://hellosundaymorning.org>
- i** www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-health

DRUGS

- ▶ Non-prescribed or illegal drugs are strictly forbidden in the hall.
- ▶ You may not possess, cultivate, manufacture, use, or distribute any non-prescribed or illegal drugs. You may not distribute prescribed drugs.
- ▶ Any paraphernalia that assists in the inhalation or consumption of drugs is prohibited and, if found, will be confiscated and disposed of immediately.

If the hall becomes aware of drug presence of any form on site, this is a health, safety, and wellbeing issue that we will follow up immediately. Initially, our staff will speak directly with you with an educational focus and may issue a verbal warning. If we observe ongoing abuse of illegal substances or alcohol, staff will arrange a meeting with you, and you may be placed on a behaviour agreement, have to engage in reparation to the hall community, or face disciplinary action. Your parent/caregiver may also be informed by hall management if we consider there is a health, safety, and wellbeing risk. Further breaches may result in a misconduct process under the Student Conduct Statute with the University.

The Level is run by the New Zealand Drug Foundation and is a space for people who use alcohol and other drugs, their friends, and their whānau. It offers information and where to find support.

- i** <https://thelevel.org.nz>

Smoking or vaping

Hall premises and grounds are smokefree and vape-free environments. You cannot smoke or use vapes or e-cigarettes in any area of the buildings, including foyers and entranceways. If you are found smoking or vaping any substance, smoking materials will be confiscated and disciplinary measures will follow.

PERSONAL SPACE AND BOUNDARIES

Respecting others' space and privacy

Living in an independent living community is very different from living at home with family and requires you to actively consider how you approach and communicate with others. It is important to be respectful of other people's personal space and boundaries. For some, borrowing things or entering a private space might not seem like a big deal, but others will be uncomfortable with this. Some people may find it easy to know how to read other people's boundaries and communicate their own, but it may be a learning journey for others, so it is important to be kind while we all navigate how to live together. It's important to be respectful, give people space, and always ask for permission. You can ask for permission by asking questions such as "Is this okay with you?" or "Do you mind if I ...?" and paying attention to the person's body language.

Respecting others' personal space

There are differences in space preferences between relatives, friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Here is some basic guidance.

- ▶ Keep at least a metre between yourself and a stranger or someone you don't know well.
- ▶ Observe body language: If someone is leaning away from you or moving backwards, you are too close. If someone steps back, don't step closer—wait to be invited to move closer. If they don't invite you to move closer, this may be their way of communicating that they want more personal space.

- ▶ Never touch someone without their permission.
- ▶ Ensure that you are not blocking exits. This is important both for safety and to make people feel comfortable.
- ▶ If someone steps into your personal space, ask them to step back. You could move slightly to the side or backwards to regain the level of space that feels comfortable for you.

Visiting someone's bedroom

- ▶ Don't enter anyone's personal space without being invited in.
- ▶ If you are walking past someone's room and you see a group of people in there, it is not a general invitation to enter and join in. The same room entry rules apply.
- ▶ If a door is closed, knock and wait for an answer and invitation to enter.
- ▶ If a door is open, say hi and ask for permission before entering.
- ▶ Do not enter another student's room if they are not there, even if the door is unlocked.

Sitting on someone's bed

- ▶ There is limited seating in bedrooms. If you have been invited in, ask where you should sit. Don't assume that you can sit on someone's bed without their permission.
- ▶ If there is not enough seating and you don't want someone sitting on your bed, or if you don't want to sit on someone else's bed, suggest moving to a common area.



Knowing when to leave

- ▶ If conversation starts to falter, or the occupier of the room starts to busy themselves doing other things, it is probably time to leave.
- ▶ If a group of you are hanging out in a bedroom and the others leave, you should leave too unless you are invited to stay and you want to.
- ▶ If you are asked to leave, it is definitely time to leave.

Asking someone to leave your room

- ▶ Some people find it more difficult to understand social cues. While being polite, also be direct in your request. For example, "It's time to go now. I have things to do."
- ▶ If you do not feel comfortable asking someone to leave your room, you could suggest moving into a common area instead.
- ▶ Contact staff using the duty phone if you feel unsafe or a person refuses to leave your room.

If you are uncomfortable with a guest your roommate or flatmate has invited in, ask to speak to your roommate privately. Let them know you are not comfortable with their guest, and find out what their plans are and whether they may be able to meet elsewhere. You may choose to be away if the guest is going to be present, or ask them not to return to your space. Ask your roommate for advance notice next time they are bringing in a guest. If, at any time, you feel unsafe, contact staff using the duty phone.

Respecting other people's property

- ▶ Never go through someone else's personal belongings.
- ▶ Do not take or borrow anything without permission.

BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

Our independent living community is a restorative community. A restorative community is one in which every member is valued and feels they belong, where all contribute to the common good, and where conflict is handled in ways that promote accountability and repair.

A restorative community fosters positive relationships founded on mutual care, respect, equality, responsibility, and honest communication.

Restorative circles

Throughout the year, staff will invite you to participate in restorative circles to strengthen relationships and improve communication on your floor. Staff may facilitate the circle using a 'talking piece' so that everyone has an equal opportunity to speak. Circles may be held for many reasons, including to:

- ▶ build positive relationships
- ▶ establish shared norms and values for your flat
- ▶ respond to conflict or problematic behaviour
- ▶ process a difficult community event or shared experience
- ▶ make decisions about group activities.

Circles are a great opportunity to get to know one another and to have a say in creating your flat culture.

ADDRESSING CONFLICT AND RULE-BREAKING

When conflicts occur, a restorative process is available. This is where those involved in the episode meet, with the help of a facilitator, to discuss the following questions:

- ▶ What happened?
- ▶ Who has been affected and in what ways?
- ▶ What can be done to make things right?
- ▶ How can we stop similar things happening in the future?

A restorative process requires the responsible student(s) to accept responsibility for their actions and to make amends, and provides the harmed parties with a clear voice in the process. The group works together to reach an agreement about what must be done to repair the harm and restore relationships.

Participation in a restorative conversation is entirely voluntary—all affected parties must agree before it goes ahead. When deemed appropriate by staff, this process may be used as an alternative to normal disciplinary procedures. Residents may request a circle or a restorative process at any time to address interpersonal conflict within the hall.

Support for resolving this conflict can be provided by senior hall staff or the Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution office.

The hall may take action under the residence agreement.

SUPPORTING BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Our staff will address and manage any behavioural concerns, wherever possible, through an informal process that could include confidential, supportive, and educational conversations with you. If concerns are raised about your behaviour, we want you to have the opportunity to be aware and understand the impact you may have had on others. We will invite you to work with staff to support your own and community wellbeing. If this is not effective, the matter may be managed under the processes in the Student Conduct Statute.

To protect the privacy of those directly involved, community members will not be informed of the specific outcomes of any restorative or misconduct process without the consent of those involved.

MISCONDUCT

The independent living handbook rules apply to your conduct as a resident. You contribute to the tone for your community and have a responsibility to help create a positive home for everyone.

If you are enrolled as a student at Victoria University of Wellington, the Student Conduct Statute applies to your conduct. We encourage you to make sure you are familiar with it.

If, at any time, your conduct amounts to, or may amount to, misconduct under the Student Conduct Statute, a formal process may be undertaken in accordance with that statute.

As outlined in the residence agreement and Student Conduct Statute, if there are serious safety or wellbeing concerns that present a significant risk to the community, we may need to take immediate, interim action to address what has happened.

If you are enrolled with a different tertiary education institution, the Schedule to your Residence Agreement applies to your conduct. We encourage you to make sure you are familiar with the Schedule. If your conduct at any time amounts to, or may amount to, misconduct under the Schedule, we may take disciplinary action against you in accordance with the Schedule.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-conduct-statute

SUPPORTING THOSE WHO HAVE CAUSED HARM

The transition to university and community living can be more difficult for some students than others. Because we all come from different backgrounds and upbringings, and have different experiences, conflict and harm may occur. This can often happen unintentionally when we go through significant transitions, and some people need a bit more time or further education to understand the expectations and behavioural norms of living in a tight-knit community.

When someone has caused harm and takes responsibility by trying to repair the harm, it is important we support them to be included in the community by:

- ▶ actively including them in social activities
- ▶ acknowledging their attempts to repair harm and supporting their efforts to connect with the community
- ▶ not gossiping or spreading rumours about them
- ▶ withholding judgement, as we may not know the whole story
- ▶ raising concerns early with staff.

Social exclusion

Social exclusion or public criticism can sometimes target an individual perceived to have committed wrongdoing. While this aims to address issues, it often targets individuals rather than the underlying problems. We encourage our residents to take responsibility for their actions and engage in constructive conversations to repair harm.

The impacts of social exclusion extend beyond those directly involved, affecting the University's ability to investigate incidents impartially. In handling sensitive situations, we prioritise the needs, and take the lead from, those who have been harmed. Involvement from other students can inadvertently cause further harm.

If you feel affected by social exclusion, reach out to our hall team for support. Everyone makes mistakes, and it's crucial to take ownership, learn, and prioritise your wellbeing within your support network.

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

While you have a responsibility to behave appropriately to other residents, you also have neighbours in nearby buildings and houses who are part of our community. Being a good neighbour is a high priority for the University and something we take very seriously. Treat your neighbours respectfully—be quiet when passing by and dispose of rubbish in bins provided. The neighbours are good people, but understandably they get tired of noise and rubbish issues caused by a small number of students.

We respond quickly to feedback from university neighbours and have an effective process for investigating. If negative feedback from neighbours has been received, we may take disciplinary action against you.

BULLYING

We expect the culture in our community to be safe and inclusive for all residents. If you are aware of any threatening or degrading behaviour being directed to any other member of our community, irrespective of whether it is an isolated incident or repeated behaviour, you should let staff know. Everyone in our community is entitled to be treated respectfully and any reports of behaviour that could be considered bullying or harassment should be addressed as quickly as possible.

Our community has no room for bullying, and there are many ways you can contribute to an inclusive and supportive culture. We encourage you to:

- ▶ talk to a residential adviser (RA), a community adviser, the deputy head of hall, the head of hall, an accommodation wellbeing adviser, or a Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team member
- ▶ call out mean jokes, gossip, or rumours if you hear them
- ▶ get involved in positive, inclusive activities in the hall
- ▶ revisit your wellbeing goals and use your strategies to manage your mood and circumstances
- ▶ talk to staff rather than take matters into your own hands.

You have the option to consider moving room or flat, in discussion with the deputy head of hall or head of hall. You also have the option to make a complaint.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is unwelcome, uninvited behaviour that can make someone feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. It does not matter if there is no intention to harass. Harassment is unlawful. The University is committed to providing a living and working environment that is free from harassment.

If the recipient perceives the harassment as such, then it is harassment. Harassment includes the use of language (written or spoken) or visual material or physical behaviour that:

- ▶ expresses hostility against, or brings into contempt or ridicule, any other person on the grounds of colour, race, ethnicity or national origins, sexual orientation, ability, or religion

- ▶ is hurtful or offensive to that other person (whether or not that is conveyed to the person complained about)
- ▶ is either repeated, or of such a significant nature that it has a detrimental effect on that other person.

Causing disharmony includes:

- ▶ publishing or distributing written, visual, or electronic material that is threatening, abusive, harmful, or insulting, including on social media
- ▶ using words that are threatening, abusive, or insulting
- ▶ physical behaviour that is deemed threatening, abusive, or insulting.

Harassment and causing disharmony are not permitted at the hall or within the university community and we may take disciplinary action against you if you engage in such conduct.

REPORTING SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

Victoria University of Wellington is committed to supporting a learning environment that is free from sexually harmful behaviour.

Sexually harmful behaviour includes:

- ▶ sexual harassment
- ▶ sexual assault
- ▶ any form of unwanted sexual advance
- ▶ request for sexual favours
- ▶ any other unwanted behaviour that is sexual in nature.

Sexual harassment can be verbal, visual, or physical, and could involve electronic forms of communication.

At the University, any sexually harmful behaviour is managed through the Sexual Harassment Response Policy and Procedures. You are entitled to live, study, socialise, and work in an environment of safety and respect. We take reports of concerning behaviour seriously. Sexually harmful behaviour undermines safety and respect, and may be a breach of the University's Student Conduct Statute or Staff Conduct Policy.

If you are feeling unsafe or have experienced behaviour at university or within the halls that concerns you, the Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team will support you. You can contact them for confidential information and advice about options, reporting, and support, or talk to a staff member who can support you to get help.

Be aware that:

- ▶ if you are an international student, making a report of concerning behaviour will not impact your visa
- ▶ any information you provide regarding concerning behaviour will not be passed on to your family or other universities unless you request that this information is shared
- ▶ if English or te reo Māori is not your first language, we can provide a translator at your request.

If it has been alleged that you have engaged in harmful behaviour, there are options for seeking advice both on and off campus. The Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team can help you understand what is involved in a formal misconduct process and what your rights are, and can work with you to identify your needs and ensure you are receiving appropriate support. If the team is also supporting a complainant, a different member of staff will work with you to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/sexual-harm-students



FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

FEEDBACK

We put our residents' satisfaction and experience at the forefront of everything we do, and we welcome your feedback and ideas. If we can make your experience better, don't wait until our formal survey—tell us now.

Talk to us

The starting point if you can't resolve a matter yourself is to speak directly to a staff member. Health and safety, hall facilities and maintenance, catering, cleaning, and ongoing noise issues can usually be resolved through this mechanism.

Feedback form

Our [online form](#) is another way you can provide us with feedback, and there is the option to do so anonymously.

Suggestion boxes

There are suggestion boxes in all halls, or you can scan the QR code from your noticeboard. Our staff are always ready to listen to, and respond to, your feedback.

Resolving issues that affect several students

In all situations, we encourage you to speak with a staff member. Other avenues for resolving issues impacting your floor or your flat, or all halls, include the following.

- ▶ Flat or floor meetings—participation in our regular hui will also enable you to talk about your own experience, and to influence the shared norms, standards, and values your flat or floor has set for your community. This is a good place to raise and resolve common room issues and matters that affect everyone on the floor.
- ▶ Hall residents' committees—these committees in all halls enable topical matters that affect a wider group of residents to be raised and resolved quickly, and provide opportunities for floor, flat, and topic representatives to highlight any matters that arise throughout the year and take part in hall planning. If you are unsure who your representative is, speak to the staff.
- ▶ Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) Halls Committee—in your community, representatives are elected to the VUWSA Halls Committee. This is the place where the elected representatives can raise issues and give opinions on behalf of fellow residents. The committee ensures that the student voice from residents is heard, and supports residents' wellbeing. If you have any issues, you can bring these up with your representative and they can advocate for you.



Sensitive issues

Sensitive issues such as harassment of any form, including allegations of sexually harmful behaviour, issues with the behaviour of another student or staff member, fear of reprisal, or matters relating to the pastoral care of an individual, are treated confidentially and not discussed in groups or with other residents who are not directly involved. These will be resolved with the support of hall management, and may include an accommodation wellbeing adviser, a member of the Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution team, and any nominated support person.

Parent or guardian feedback

If a parent, guardian, or guarantor wishes to provide feedback, they should email the hall directly, email Te Kopanga—University Accommodation Wellington at accommodation@vuw.ac.nz or use the online complaint form. Note that if the matter is sensitive, we may require the permission of the student before we can discuss it, and we may involve an adviser from the student interest team.

REPORT A CONCERN

Occasionally, things don't go as planned, but we are dedicated to resolving issues as quickly as possible and ensuring they don't happen again. Resolving issues is a normal part of hall life, and before making a complaint, it is expected that residents will work to resolve the issue through open communication with staff.

We generally find this is the fastest way to resolve matters of concern. We understand that there could be a situation where you might not want to contact the head of hall, in which case you can report your concern on our online form or speak to, or email, the accommodation team. Tell us your name, the flat or hall where you are staying, and the issue you have experienced.

📞 04 463 5896

✉ accommodation@vuw.ac.nz

📄 https://accommodation.wgtn.ac.nz/%20StarRezPortalX/526CB48F/46/1026/Feedback__report_a_c-Providing_feedback_

Halls are restorative communities in which every member is valued and should feel they belong, where all contribute to the common good, and where conflict is handled in ways that promote accountability and repair.

You are welcome to include a support person to help resolve your concern. The support person may be another student, a staff member, an accommodation wellbeing adviser, a family member, or another supportive person.

The specific needs of anyone involved in a concerning situation are considered, and culturally appropriate approaches that consider traditional processes for raising and resolving issues are available.

The University is committed to acknowledging Te Tiriti o Waitangi by working in partnership with Māori. The spirit of tikanga is to seek resolutions to disputes and concerns in a manner that encourages a facilitated open exchange of views, with a view to seeking consensus and acceptance from all parties.

You can also email the University's Tauria—Student Interest and Conflict Resolution office at studentinterest@vuw.ac.nz for a confidential conversation or advice. This team is available to support students and staff experiencing conflict or who have a complaint or an issue with anyone in the university community. If you are not satisfied with the resolution at this stage, you will be provided with details on how to take the matter further.

Students can access an external advocacy service through the student association if desired. Information is available on the [VUWSA website](#).

We will inform the residents directly involved how the concern will be handled, how it is progressing, the range of possible outcomes, and an expected time frame based on the complexity and sensitivity of the concern.

COMPLAINTS

If, after working with us, you are still not happy with how we've handled your concern, you can make a complaint using our online form. You can find the form and more about other avenues for making complaints on our website.

📄 www.wgtn.ac.nz/accommodation/current-residents/feedback-concerns-complaints

DISPUTES

There are also options external to the University for you to consider for seeking resolution should you not be satisfied with the outcome or internal processing of your complaint. You can contact the following:

- ▶ VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz/advocacy
- ▶ Tertiary Education Commission helpline: 0800 601 302, online at www.tec.govt.nz or email complaints@tec.govt.nz
- ▶ New Zealand Qualifications Authority: www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/make-a-complaint/make-a-complaint-about-a-provider
- ▶ Office of the Ombudsman: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz
- ▶ New Zealand Human Rights Commission: www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints
- ▶ Tertiary education provider complaints process: www.education.govt.nz/further-education/information-for-tertiary-students/tertiary-education-provider-complaints-process/
- ▶ Study complaints: www.studycomplaints.org.nz/about
- ▶ Privacy Commissioner: www.privacy.org.nz/privacy-act-2020/privacy-principles/6/evaluative-material/



YOUR NEW HOME

This may be the first time you've lived in an independent living situation. To help you on your way, this section aims to cover some of the most important issues you'll have to deal with, such as where to wash your clothes, how to look after the electrical equipment in your room or common area, how to get online, what you need to clean, and much more. Get in touch with a member of our team if you're uncertain about anything.

ROOM CONTENTS

You will be asked to complete and return an online room inspection form within 48 hours of your arrival. Ensure all defects and missing items are noted on it, as you will be held responsible for the cost of replacing items or repairing damage in your room that was not noted on your arrival.

Your room and flat are fully furnished. Flats are also provided with all crockery, cutlery, and kitchen equipment (except at Education House). Although there is a variation in the size and layout of rooms at each hall, each resident is provided with a:

- ▶ bookshelf
- ▶ mattress protector
- ▶ mirror
- ▶ noticeboard

- ▶ single or king-single bed and mattress (Everton Hall twin rooms have a queen-sized bed and mattress)
- ▶ study desk and chair
- ▶ wardrobe.

Check with staff before bringing any furniture of your own. Loudspeakers and strobe lighting are not permitted. At the end of your stay, you are responsible for removing any furniture of your own. If you do not remove this furniture, you will be charged for its removal, and it may be disposed of at the head of hall's discretion.

You are permitted to shift the supplied furniture around the room, provided that no fixtures or fittings are unscrewed or taken down, and you return the furniture to its original position before you leave. You may not place communal furniture in your room.

You are required to bring your own towels, bathmat, and bedding, including sheets, pillow, duvet, and blankets. If you need a linen pack, you can book one in the getting-to-know-you online form and it will be in your room on arrival. It includes a duvet, duvet cover, flat sheets, pillow, pillowcase, and blanket.

You should also consider bringing:

- ▶ Blu-Tack
- ▶ cleaning products
- ▶ coat hangers
- ▶ computer/laptop
- ▶ desk lamp
- ▶ emergency kit containing items such as batteries, canned and non-perishable food, a foil blanket, a portable power bank, a torch, reusable face masks or a supply of disposable masks, and water
- ▶ headphones
- ▶ laundry basket and washing powder
- ▶ personal first aid kit
- ▶ toiletries.

Prohibited items

The following items are not permitted and may be confiscated due to the risk of fire, fire alarm activation, damage, and impact on other students:

- ▶ candles
- ▶ faulty electrical appliances and appliances that do not have a current electrical test tag
- ▶ firearms and weapons (including replicas)
- ▶ fridges in bedrooms
- ▶ heaters
- ▶ incense
- ▶ oil burners
- ▶ steam diffusers
- ▶ your own beds and large furniture items
- ▶ 3D printers.

Pets or animals, including fish, are also prohibited.

FLAT MEETINGS

In the first two weeks after your arrival at your new home, the staff will help you set up a flat meeting. There is an expectation for all residents to attend flat meetings held at various times during the year. This is an ideal opportunity to address small issues before they grow, and ensure your flat is functioning well and meeting everyone's expectations.

Topics discussed will include:

- ▶ cleaning rosters
- ▶ damage
- ▶ flat norms
- ▶ health and safety
- ▶ noise
- ▶ support services available to you and your peers
- ▶ visitors and guests.

KEYS, ACCESS CARDS, AND SECURITY

You will be issued a room key and, if relevant, an access card on arrival. You are not permitted to make copies of these. If you lose your access card or room key, you will be required to pay for a replacement.

Be responsible with your room key and access card.

To reduce the risk of theft:

- ▶ lock your room whenever you leave it
- ▶ do not lend your room key or access card to anyone
- ▶ keep your access card and room key with you at all times
- ▶ report any lost keys or access cards to reception immediately.

Charges apply:

- ▶ \$90 to replace the lock on your door if you misplace your room key.

RIGHT OF ENTRY

We may enter your room, including in your absence, for the following purposes:

- ▶ Routine check:
 - ▶ to carry out repairs or maintenance
 - ▶ to conduct room checks.

If any person requires access to your room, staff will attempt to notify you at least 24 hours in advance.

- ▶ Welfare check:
 - ▶ ensuring your personal safety and wellbeing
 - ▶ ensuring the wellbeing of other residents
 - ▶ to attend to other health and safety concerns, including in any emergency
 - ▶ to deal with any nuisance arising from your room, such as loud music.

Residents are not permitted to obstruct any employee of the University, fire wardens, or authorised technicians in the performance of their duties.

Our staff will not permit any other person, including your friends and relatives, to access your room without your verbal or written permission.

LOCKED OUT?

There is always someone who can help you get back into your building or room if you lock yourself out. Contact a flatmate first to let you in.

If you're locked out, call staff using the duty phone and a uniformed staff member will come to assist you.

Other, more pressing matters may prohibit these staff from attending to your lock-out straight away, so please be patient.



ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

We ask that, to prevent overloading of our circuits and to conserve energy, you keep only smaller electrical items (for example, computers, hair straighteners, lamps) in your room. Keep these in a good, clean operating condition to meet our safety regulations.

Other than hair straighteners, any appliances with open heating elements such as hot plates or electric heaters, barbecues, and fridges are prohibited in rooms, unless you have express permission from a staff member.

All electrical appliances brought to your flat must be safety checked at the beginning of the year. Only safety-tagged appliances may be used within your accommodation. This is to ensure we comply with fire and safety policies, ensuring the safety of all residents. It is your responsibility to make sure any electrical equipment you bring has been checked and tagged. There will be an electrician on site for a limited time during the first few weeks after move-in, so take advantage of this if needed.

ROOM CHANGES

If, for some reason, things aren't quite right with your room or flat, let us know as soon as possible. We may be able to move you to another room or building, subject to availability. We would prefer to try and work out the problem first.

Relocation—your initiative

You must remain in the room allocated to you for the duration of the Term, unless we agree otherwise. If you are having issues with your room and would like a change of room, consider these points first.

- ▶ We expect you to remain in your room for a minimum of six weeks after arrival as everyone settles in.
- ▶ We encourage you to discuss the situation with our staff. We will attempt to resolve any conflicts or points of difference before considering a change of room.
- ▶ If, after remaining in your room for six weeks and after discussing the situation with our staff, you would still like a change of room, you may apply in writing to the head of hall for a change of room.
- ▶ Any change of room is at our discretion and will generally require another resident to change rooms.
- ▶ If we are able to offer you another room, you will be required to pay a room-change fee of \$50 when you change rooms.

Relocation—our initiative

In exceptional circumstances, you may be asked to move to another room in the hall, a different room type within the hall, or a different university hall of residence or other type of accommodation.

SUMMER STAYS

Whether you are studying in Trimester 3, staying for work, or wanting a base to explore more of Wellington and the local area, we can provide a room for you over summer. This may require relocation so you are not on your own. Talk to us to arrange short- or long-term stays.

INTERNET

Victoria University of Wellington students can connect to the VUWstudent network and enter their university username and password to access the internet. All other residents and guests can connect to the VUWguest network. You will be redirected to a login page where you can click on 'Don't have an account'. You will be required to enter an email address and access will be granted for 14 days, after which you'll need to log in again.

For further information and instructions, go to www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-wifi

If you are having problems accessing the Wi-Fi, contact Digital Solutions on 04 463 5050 or its-servicedesk@vuw.ac.nz

MAIL

Your address is listed under the contact details on page 3. Remember to include your room or flat number.

Letters

Standard letters will be placed in the mailboxes at the office or in your common area. Check and pick up your mail regularly.

Parcels

Parcels delivered by couriers will be held for collection at the office and you'll be advised via email. Please check and pick up your mail regularly. Although we accept parcels from courier companies, we do not accept any liability if the mail goes astray.

FACILITIES

CLEANING

You are responsible for cleaning your own room and doing your share of the cleaning of the common areas of your flat or studio. You will also need to provide your own cleaning products, soap, and toilet paper. A team member is available during flat meetings to help create a roster.

We have cleaning options available during the turnover period. You can find out more information about turnover cleaning and pricing online.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/accommodation/current-residents/living-in-an-independent-hall

SOCIAL AREAS AND FLAT COMMUNAL FACILITIES

Residents are expected to keep the common rooms and lounges clean and tidy. Respect that other residents use these areas and keep them tidy, remove your personal items, and dispose of rubbish.

Do not remove any furniture from lounges or social areas.

Where barbecues are available for your use, ask the office or a team member to unlock them for you. They will give you instructions on safe use. The barbecue must be cleaned after use.

At Everton Hall and Education House, there are communal areas for you and your fellow students to use. They're great as meeting points or places to study, watch films, or just hang out. They are focal points for activities and many of our events will take place in common rooms and outdoor spaces.

BATHROOMS

Hot water and damp towels tend to create a bacteria-friendly environment, so keep tabs on the state of your sink, shower, and toilet. Simple things make a difference, such as flushing the toilet, mopping up any excess water, hanging up the bathmat, and rinsing out the hand basin, especially after shaving.

LAUNDRY FACILITIES

Communal laundry facilities, including washing machines and dryers, are available for your use. If you need to report a problem with one of the machines, log a maintenance request in the accommodation portal or advise a staff member.

If you prefer to hang out your clothes, use washing lines where these are provided. Drying racks used indoors create dampness issues, resulting in mould and odours. Do not use portable clothes drying racks inside.

Managing your laundry

Keep on top of your laundry. One or two medium-sized loads a week is a good base. If you try to put too much in the machine at once, your clothes won't get clean.

Keep your whites looking sharp by washing your dark clothes separately from your light clothes. Read the care labels in your clothing. If the label says wash in cool water, do it! Shrinking your favourite jersey costs a lot more than taking time to read the label.

Unless you love to iron, remove clothes from the dryer as soon as they are done, and fold or hang them up. Most wrinkles are the result of clothes sitting for hours or even days in a pile. If you need an iron, there is one available in your flat and any shared laundry room.

RUBBISH

It is your responsibility to make sure your room and common areas of your flat or hall are kept in a safe, hygienic state on a daily basis. Our team will check in with you to make sure you're looking after yourself and your living spaces regularly.

Take out your rubbish when the bag is full. If you're about to put your foot in there and stamp it down, it's time to take the rubbish out.

Compost

Compost bins may be available. A list of what to place in these can be found on your flat noticeboard.

Recycling

You can find out about rubbish collection stations on noticeboards.

We'd love you to recycle as much as possible, so it's worth thinking about how you and your flatmates are going to separate the rubbish during the week.

Once you've decided on a plan of action, write up a roster for emptying the rubbish bins. We provide separate bins to help with this.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is installed in many locations throughout the University and halls of residence. Our CCTV cameras are managed in accordance with the University's security policy and guidelines.

BIKE STORAGE

If you have a bike, we ask you to be considerate and adhere to the following rules.

- ▶ Don't keep or leave bicycles in your room, common area, or stairwells. Not only could it cause damage, but it is dangerous and can block fire egress routes.
- ▶ Don't secure or lock any bikes to objects such as benches, light posts, handrails, or fence railings. This is because they can end up blocking access routes, which could cause major problems should a fire or natural disaster occur.

The University assumes no responsibility for your bike while it is parked at our property. We recommend that you insure your bike and keep it secure with a D-lock. See the office for further details about where to store your bike safely.

Bicycles found to be secured anywhere other than in a bike storage unit will be removed. It is your responsibility to store your and your guests' bikes appropriately.

We encourage you to park motorbikes or motor scooters close to, or on, your property to avoid theft. If you need a secure space, let us know.

CAR PARKING

For drivers, there are a few options, depending on where you live. Ask in advance about parking and related costs before you arrive, as parking is limited.

We can provide a letter of support to help your application for a resident's park on all Wellington City Council streets. Let us know your flat address if you require this letter in order to submit your application.

At Everton Hall, if you have a visitor who requires longer parking, ask at the office if there is any space available as we may be able to supply some short-term parking. Display the parking permit on the rear window of the car for easy identification. No on-site parking is available at Education House, Kelburn Flats, Whānau Mārama Apartments, or 222 Willis Apartments.

ABSENCE

Your welfare is important to us, and we want to make sure that all our residents are safe. A staff member may check rooms suspected of being empty or unoccupied for long periods of time. To avoid others looking for you, update your 'away from hall' details in the accommodation portal and inform your fellow residents if you are going to be away for more than 48 hours.

If you are going home or travelling during the holidays, make sure you have locked your windows and doors and switched off any electrical items. Additionally, don't leave any valuable items in communal areas of the building. You don't need to move out or move your belongings during the holidays. Remember to keep your room and building keys somewhere safe while you're on holiday or return them to staff for safekeeping.

CONTENTS INSURANCE

We strongly recommend all residents take out personal contents insurance. The University assumes no responsibility for the personal property of its residents and their guests, so the best way to protect your belongings is to get them insured against loss, damage, and theft.

REPORTING MAINTENANCE ISSUES

If anything goes wrong with the maintenance of your room or flat, submit a request using the online maintenance request found in the accommodation portal. Provide as much information as possible. The more detail we have, the quicker we can get the problem fixed.

URGENT MAINTENANCE

Urgent maintenance involves things that need immediate attention, such as:

- ▶ broken doors or windows
- ▶ electricity outages
- ▶ floods or leaks.

On the rare occasion that any of these happen, they should be reported immediately to staff by calling the duty phone, and we will see that the matter is attended to as quickly as possible.

If urgent problems occur after hours, report them via the duty phone.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All residents agree to comply with the University's Health and Safety Policy. In particular, you will take reasonable care of yourself and others, cooperate with hall staff, and ensure that your acts do not adversely affect others. You will also report to hall staff, as soon as possible, any matter that may be, or may create, a health and safety issue.

Scheduled maintenance and construction work may take place from time to time, as required. Your head of hall will provide further details and any relevant health and safety information. Ensure you follow this.

If you find any scheduled work to be disruptive, let your head of hall know as soon as possible.

LIVE SUSTAINABLY



We care about our people, our planet, and our business, which is why we are committed to sustainable and responsible practices. You can get involved and support sustainability through the decisions you make every day.

WASTE

Know your waste

We strive to reduce levels of waste and decrease the amount that ends up in landfill. Make sure you familiarise yourself with the waste bins available (general waste, recycling, green waste) and dispose accordingly. If you are unsure, you can go to the [Wellington City Council website](#) for more recycling information.

Get your flatmates involved and make sure recycling is a habit you get into every day.

Repurpose and re-use

As a resident, you have access to the whole community via our social media pages. If you have items that are no longer used, they might find a new home with other residents. We will organise sustainability events or swap sessions if there is enough interest, so reach out to your friendly team at reception who can facilitate this. We also encourage donating any good-quality second-hand clothes to charities such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, or St Vincent de Paul.

WATER

Showers

A hot shower after a long day of classes, work, or exercise is a great way to unwind or prepare yourself for socialising. However, it is important to limit shower time to conserve water. Shower timers are a great way to start and keep this good habit. We recommend 'one-song showers' that take no longer than four minutes.

Taps

Brushing your teeth, washing the dishes, filling a bucket to mop the floor—all these involve turning a tap on and, most importantly, off again. Using only the amount of water you need is a great way to limit usage.

ELECTRICITY USE

Lights

On average, lighting accounts for 10–15 percent of household electricity use. By making sure you turn off lights when you leave your bedroom or common areas, you can help to make instant change.

Heaters and fans

Before turning on a heater, try putting on a pair of warm socks or grabbing an extra blanket. In summer, try opening your windows before turning on a fan. As always, make sure these appliances are switched off when you leave.

Standby mode

You may not know that devices and appliances still use power when in standby mode. Make sure you are turning these off at the power point when not in use to minimise energy usage. Examples include the kettle, microwave, and gaming systems.

As a community of young and diverse students, this is the perfect place to develop, practise, and share sustainable habits that can make positive change for our environment.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

FIRE AND FIRE ALARMS

The flats are equipped with fire detection/protection devices which may include smoke detectors, heat detectors, extinguishers, and fire alarm manual call points, depending on the residence. Take a moment to identify these in and around your building and room. Knowing your house number and street name is very important to direct emergency services to the correct place if you need to phone 111.

The duty team and residential fire wardens have been trained in how to respond to such an emergency. Please do exactly as they, or any emergency personnel, ask.

EVACUATION

On hearing a fire alarm sounding, residents must evacuate immediately and follow the emergency procedure.

Not all independent living properties are automatically connected to Fire and Emergency New Zealand. In flats and houses, phone 111 and ask for the fire service.

Fire and Emergency services' advice will be followed on arrival.

Important notes to follow:

- ▶ Do not attempt to take any personal belongings with you.
- ▶ Close doors behind you as you exit.
- ▶ Where present, follow the green signs indicating the shortest exit route.
- ▶ Make your way to the assembly point.

Failure to evacuate may result in fines or disciplinary action.

ASSEMBLY POINT

The team will explain the assembly points at your residence when you arrive. This information will also be clearly displayed in your flat or common area. Fire alarms are often caused by leaving food in toasters or from hair dryers or straighteners being operated under a smoke detector. Our fire protection systems are sensitive to ensure we keep you safe, so take care to supervise cooking when making your snacks, and open a window or move away from detectors if styling your hair creates steam. We are sure that you don't want to be responsible for the disruption of a fire evacuation.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

These are listed in your flat common areas. Please review and know what to do in an emergency. Any resident found to have set off a false fire alarm, whether purposefully or because of carelessness, is responsible for any charges applied by fire service providers and may also be subject to fines and disciplinary action.

EARTHQUAKE

In the first instance, 'drop, cover, and hold'. If an evacuation is necessary, follow evacuation procedures quickly and efficiently.

If you are outside the hall during an earthquake, move no more than a few steps away from buildings, trees, streetlights, and power lines, then 'drop, cover, and hold'.

The National Emergency Management Agency has more information about what to do in an earthquake.

i <https://getready.govt.nz/emergency/earthquakes>

TSUNAMI

A strong earthquake can cause a tsunami. It's important to remember 'if it's long or strong, get gone'. If you're in a tsunami evacuation zone, don't wait for an official warning if the earthquake is strong or lasts longer than a minute—get to higher ground as soon as possible.

Our Pipitea campus, Coastal Ecology Lab, Miramar Creative Centre, and Ferrier and Robinson Research Institutes are all located in tsunami evacuation zones. Everton Hall is located next to a tsunami evacuation zone.

[You can find tsunami evacuation zones here.](#)



ADMINISTRATION

This section covers a variety of topics to do with your residence agreement. If you need further clarification, you can ask any member of the team and they will be happy to help you.

Make sure you control your money so it doesn't control you. Read this page and let us know if there are any points that are unclear.

FEES

Activity/equipment fee

The activity fee is the money you pay for organised events held on and off site; for example, day trips, barbecues, movie nights, cocktail parties, and more. Additionally, some events may be offered on a user-pays basis. This fee also covers your move-in pack.

Administration fee

When you paid your deposit, you also paid an administration fee. This is to cover administration costs and is not refundable.

RENT PAYMENTS

Payments must be made in accordance with your residence agreement. If you find yourself in financial difficulty, contact staff as soon as possible. You can arrange payment plans that suit your weekly or fortnightly budget. The best thing to do is to seek help and advice early—we're more than willing to help you work out any problems. For financial assistance, you can also contact the team at Te Ratonga Penapena Pūtea—Student Finance.

Arrival and payment information and all invoices and statements are sent on an automated cycle to residents and their financial guarantors. We encourage residents to discuss any financial problems with their financial guarantor.

Payment method

Payment of the deposit and the instalments must be made through the hall online portal at www.wgtn.ac.nz/accom

The sign-in details were provided to you by email.

To access the accommodation portal, you will need to set a password. Go to www.wgtn.ac.nz/accom and type the username (email) you used to apply, and click 'Forgot Password'. You will be emailed a link where you can set a secure password for the portal. If you are unsure of your username, email the accommodation team directly at accommodation@vuw.ac.nz

The online portal allows you to pay securely and instantly by credit card, debit card, and internet banking. If you are using a credit card to pay your accommodation fees, there will be a 1.9 percent transaction fee applied to cover merchant charges.

YOUR BOND

You were required to pay a bond before starting your residency. This fee is refunded at the end of your time with us, as long as the final inspection of your room or flat following departure is satisfactory. See the section on moving out on page 26.

Note: It may take up to six weeks after the end of your residence agreement for this money to be refunded into your nominated account.

DAMAGE

Individual liability

The Hall Residence Agreement requires you to keep the facilities—including your room, the flat or apartment, and all fixtures, fittings, and chattels within these areas—clean and tidy, and to pay for any cleaning, damage, repair, and maintenance for which you or your guests are responsible. Keep your room in the condition it was in when you arrived.

Examples for which you may be liable include costs to repair damage caused by your guests, the cost of cleaning, repairing and/or repainting your room, and the cost of repairing damage to walls caused by adhesive tape.

Joint liability

We encourage those at fault to take responsibility for their actions. However, sometimes damage or theft will occur that cannot be attributed to individual residents, despite our best efforts.

Under the Hall Residence Agreement, if, due to damage of any kind, any cleaning, repair, or maintenance (including replacement) is required to the facilities, and responsibility cannot be attributed to individual residents, you will be liable for a pro-rata share of the cost of such cleaning, damage, replacement of missing crockery and cutlery, or maintenance, as determined by us. These costs are charged monthly to your account.

CANCELLATION

The Hall Residence Agreement contains details about your ability to cancel the Agreement, and your liability if you decide to cancel.

If you are considering cancelling the Agreement, we encourage you to discuss your situation with the head of hall or one of the staff. If you decide to cancel, you must sign into the accommodation portal and complete an application to withdraw, which will be sent to the head of hall. The head of hall will seek approval for your withdrawal from the director of Campus Operations.



YOUR FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

It is important to know that when you accepted a room in our community, you signed a legally binding agreement that commits you to pay for the room for the term of your contract.

Financial stressors can be serious and can impact your study and wellbeing. A hardship fund is available for students struggling with their finances.

Help for financial issues

Managing money is a skill you can learn and get better at—like any skill, it takes practice and time. Resources are available to provide guidance on your relationship with money.

In the event of unforeseen financial issues, we encourage you to discuss your situation with the head of hall before the due date for payment. Speak to our staff about tailoring payment plans to assist with your budgeting. Student finance advisers may also be able to help. You can use student hardship funds towards your accommodation.

While we will endeavour to assist you, we reserve our rights under the Hall Residence Agreement and the handbook in the event of any non-payment.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/financial-survival

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff and residents are expected to treat each other with respect and confidentiality, in accordance with the University policy, including its privacy policies and Student Conduct Statute. The University Privacy Notice governs the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of your personal information.

i www.wgtn.ac.nz/site-info/privacy

Authority to disclose personal information to a third party

If a third party, such as a parent or caregiver, wishes to access your personal information, we may require written authorisation from you to release the information. In these cases, we will contact you to seek relevant consent.

Generally, the University will not release your personal information to a third party unless it is appropriate to do so under the University's Privacy Notice, or where you have given us your consent to do so.

To provide your authorisation, contact your head of hall.

Note that your consent will not be required to contact guarantors if payments are outstanding, if a person is responsible for damage or setting off fire alarms, or if a person is being asked to leave.

We may also contact your emergency contact person if we are concerned about your health, safety, or wellbeing, in accordance with the University's Privacy Notice.

MOVING OUT

You will vacate your room on, or shortly before, the termination date of your contract, unless you have arranged and received written confirmation of a different agreement. We will email you nearer the time to remind you about what you need to do when leaving.

There are several rules to adhere to when leaving your room. We want to ensure the room's next resident gets the room as you found it.

- ▶ Before leaving, you must have paid all your fees and charges due under your Residence Agreement.
- ▶ Staff will inspect rooms on your departure. Please book an inspection time. If you would like a pre-inspection, you must arrange this prior to your day of departure.
- ▶ Your room and flat must be left in the same state of cleanliness and repair as they were on your first day of occupation. We do take fair wear and tear into consideration, as well as any items noted in the arrival inventory form you completed when you moved in.
- ▶ All furniture and fittings within your room and common areas must be left in the appropriate rooms. If any are damaged or missing, you may be charged.
- ▶ Following the inspection of your room and common areas, you will be charged for any repairs, replacements, or cleaning expenses required. This amount will be deducted from your deposit.
- ▶ Make sure that you return your room key on your departure. Extra charges will apply for lost keys.

To find out more, check out our website.

- ❗ www.wgtn.ac.nz/accommodation/current-residents/moving-out





LEGAL INFORMATION

HALL RESIDENCE AGREEMENT

If you are a resident, you will have entered into a Hall Residence Agreement before taking up accommodation at the hall.

The Hall Residence Agreement binds you for the Term set out in the Agreement and requires you to read and comply with this handbook.

TERMS

Throughout this handbook, capitalised terms have the meaning attributed to them in the Agreement. When we refer to we/our/us, we mean Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington, and when we refer to you/your, we mean the resident.

NOTICES

Written notices under the Hall Residence Agreement can be sent to:

✉ accommodation@vuw.ac.nz

📍 Te Kopanga—University Accommodation Wellington
Room 201, Level 2, 2 Waiteata Road
Wellington 6012
New Zealand

📍 Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600
Wellington 6140
New Zealand



TE KOPANGA—UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION WELLINGTON

📞 04 463 5896 ✉ accommodation@vuw.ac.nz ⓘ www.wgtn.ac.nz/accommodation